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Central Statistics Office

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Preas Ráiteas Press Statement Census 2011 Results

Profile 8 Our Bill of Health – Health, Disability and Carers in Ireland

The Central Statistics Office today released the latest publication in its series of Census 2011 results, showing that a total of 595,335 persons, accounting for 13.0 per cent of the population, had a disability in April 2011. Of these 289,728 (48.7%) were male while 305,607 (51.3%) were female.

Today's publication, "*Profile 8 Our Bill of Health – Health, Disability and Carers in Ireland*", presents a profile of the health of the Irish population, focusing in detail on disability and carers who provide unpaid assistance.

Deirdre Cullen, Senior Statistician at the CSO: "This report provides further analysis of a number of important themes from the Census 2011 results. Firstly it examines disability, looking in detail at the people with a disability from the point of view of family status, living arrangements, education, work and the different type of disabilities that affect people. The second theme in this report is the general health of the population which analyses responses to a new question on general health looking in detail at various aspects such as social class, disability and marital status. The report also profiles carers in Ireland – those who provide unpaid assistance for a friend or family member with a long-term illness, health problem or disability, and includes for the first time new results on children who act as carers."

The full report is available on the CSO website at www.cso.ie/census along with all the data which is available in a range of interactive web tables, allowing users to build their own tables by selecting the data they are interested in and downloading it in an easy to use format for their own analysis.

Ms Cullen concluded "This report provides an overview of the health of the Irish people in 2011, particularly those who suffer a disability, and the people who care for family and friends in poor health or with a disability. The report contains yet more analysis and results from Census 2011 on these important themes including new information on the general health of the population which was asked for the first time in an Irish census in 2011. Further details on these results, and all census data, from county level right down to town, electoral division and Small Area level is available on the census page of the CSO web site."

Highlights of the report

Disability

A total of 595,335 persons, accounting for 13.0 per cent of the population, had a disability in April 2011. Of these 289,728 (48.7%) were male while 305,607 (51.3%) were female.

[More/...](#)



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Cities top disability tables

Limerick city had the highest rate of disability with 18.2 per cent of persons disabled, followed by Cork (17.7%), Waterford (15.3%) and Dublin (14.9%) cities. Galway city was the only major city to have a lower than average incidence of disability with 11.9 per cent.

The lowest rates of disability were found in Fingal (10.2%), Meath (10.7%) and Kildare (11.6%).

Elderly disabled, living alone

A total of 56,087 disabled people aged 65 and over lived alone. A condition that limited basic physical activities affected 35,960 people in this group, of whom just over 25,000 or 69.6 per cent were women. Substantial numbers in this age group also suffered from pain, breathing or other chronic illnesses (25,123 persons), had difficulty in going outside the home alone (22,989) and in participating in other activities (21,844).

Lower level of education for disabled

Amongst disabled persons aged 15 to 49, 16.3 per cent had completed no higher than primary level education compared with 5.1 per cent of the general population, while secondary school was the highest level completed by 22.3 per cent of disabled which compared with 15.1 per cent of non-disabled.

Working with a disability

There were 162,681 persons with a disability in the labour force giving a labour force participation rate of 30 per cent, compared to 61.9 per cent for the overall population.

Of the total of 542,277 people aged 15 and over with a disability, 112,502 or 20.7 per cent were at work. This compares with 50.1 per cent of the overall population aged 15 and over.

Living in communal establishments

A total of 44,952 people with disabilities (18,875 males and 26,077 females) were enumerated in communal establishments in April 2011, accounting for 7.6 per cent of all disabled persons.

Type of Disability

The most common disability overall was a difficulty with pain, breathing or other chronic illness or condition which was experienced by 46.2 per cent of all disabled people; this was followed by a difficulty with basic physical activities, experienced by 41.1 per cent. Both disabilities were strongly age-related.

Looking at each type of disability, a total of 51,718 people or 1.1 per cent of the population were blind or had a sight related disability, with more males at all ages up to the 70-74 age group. A total of 92,060 people (2%) were deaf or had a hearing related disability and 244,739 people (5.3%) had a difficulty with basic physical activities.

In total 57,709 people, (1.3%) suffered from an intellectual disability, with the greatest incidence amongst 10-14 year old males with almost 4,000 persons, (more than double that of females at 1,900) affected in this age group. A difficulty with learning, remembering or concentrating was experienced by 137,070 people or 3 per cent of the population.

Census 2011 showed that 96,004 people, (2.1%) had a psychological or emotional condition while 274,762 people, (6%) had a disability connected with pain, breathing or another chronic illness or condition.

Health

A question on general health was introduced for the first time in Census 2011 and asked respondents to rate their general health in one of five categories from very good to very bad. Self-perceived health provides a well validated and widely used measure of actual health, despite its subjective nature.

The results clearly show the decline in general health with age, with 87 per cent of 10-14 year olds perceiving their health as very good, which had fallen to 60 per cent by age 40-44 and 30 per cent by age 65-69.

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Better health in suburbs

People living in the suburbs of the five major cities had the best overall health with 92.1 per cent of the suburban population having good or very good health compared with only 88.4 per cent in cities.

People in Limerick city had the poorest health of all administrative counties with 2.6 per cent of all people having bad or very bad health, followed by the cities of Cork (2.2%), Dublin (2%) and Waterford (1.9%).

A healthy marriage

Eighty per cent of single men in their early fifties were of good or very good health, compared with ninety per cent of married men in the same age group, a ten point difference. While married women also indicated better health than their single counterparts the gap was narrower with 83.2 per cent of singles indicating good or very good health compared with 89.2 per cent of married, a smaller six point difference.

Family life and good health

A very high proportion (94.7%) of the under 50s living in family households had good or very good health compared with only 86 per cent of those living alone; among the over 50s, 67.3 per cent of persons living alone reported good or very good health compared with 78.9 per cent for those in family households.

Carers

The census showed that a total of 187,112 persons or 4.1 per cent of the total population were providing unpaid assistance to others in April 2011. Of these carers 114,113 (61%) were women and 72,999 (39%) men. It also showed that 4,228 children aged under 15 years were engaged in providing care to others, accounting for 2.3 per cent of all carers.

Women provided two-thirds of care

A total of 6,287,510 hours of care were provided by carers each week, giving an average of 33.6 hours of unpaid help and assistance each. Females provided almost two-thirds (66.1%) of all care hours.

The peak age for caring amongst women was 45-49 with more than 1 in 10 (11.2%) of all women in this age group providing unpaid care, amounting to 572,680 hours every week. Substantial amounts of care were also provided by the elderly (aged 70+) who were providing almost 800,000 hours (795,916) of unpaid care a week in April 2011.

Young Carers

Children aged 9 and under provided a total of 13,738 hours of care while the older age group of 10 to 14 year olds provided 24,758 hours. The majority of this care was provided by those caring for less than 2 hours per day.

For copies of the publication:

To view and download the publication, visit the CSO website at www.cso.ie/census.

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